Transitioning out of Birth to Three

Moving from program to program is called transition. As your child nears age 3, when services from the Birth to Three program will end, he or she may transition to preschool special education offered by your local school district. To insure that the process is smooth and that services are in place no later than your child's third birthday, it is essential that families, Birth to Three service providers, and school district personnel walk through this transition process together, one step at a time.

To plan ahead:

Your family can:

- Begin to discuss what types of programs or services you would like for your child and family after Birth to Three services end
- Talk about transition with your service coordinator
- Give written permission to your Birth to Three program to notify your school district about your child at least six months before your child turns three. If you prefer, you may contact your school district yourself by phone or letter at any time. Starting the process early offers the best opportunity for a smooth transition.

Birth to Three Staff will:

- Provide your family with information about transition
- Begin the process by developing the transition plan section of the IFSP and identifying outcomes with your family
- Assist you in referring your child to your local school district for an eligibility evaluation
- Schedule a transition planning meeting with your family and the school district staff up to six months, but at least 90 days before your child's third birthday.

School District staff will:

- Work with your family and the Birth to Three staff on transition planning
- Introduce your family to the school district's planning and placement team members and school staff
- Describe the process for determining whether your child is eligible for preschool special education.

What is a transition meeting?

With your permission, Birth to Three staff will convene a meeting to discuss services your child may receive after you and your child leave the Birth to Three program. For children who may be eligible for preschool special education, the meeting will include your family, Birth to Three staff and preschool special education staff. this meeting will take place at least 90 days before your child's third birthday.

At the meeting, the transition plan section of the IFSP will be completed. The plan will outline the steps that your family, your Birth to Three program staff and school district staff will take to address the end of Birth to Three services and the transition to new programs, services and people.

Some questions to ask at the Transition Meeting:

- How will the school district decide if my child is eligible for special education?
- What kind of testing will be needed?
- Who can we call if we have questions?

At the Transition Meeting:

Your family can:

- Share your hopes for your child
- Participate in the transition process at the level that feels comfortable to you
- Ask questions about anything that is unclear

Birth to Three staff will:

- Share information about your child's progress in the Birth to Three program
- Participate in transition planning
- Help write a transition plan with specific steps for transition
- Help you identify additional community resources and supports

School District staff will:

- Participate in the transition planning process
- Explain your child's and your rights as a parent
- discuss eligibility for preschool special education and determine whether additional evaluation information is needed
- If your child is determined eligible, discuss the options for providing the special education services needed by your child.

If additional information is needed in order to determine your child's eligibility, the school district planning and placement team will describe the kind of testing that will be done. It may be formal or informal. Some of the information may be gathered in natural, play-like situations. Other tests may require specific activities. Your permission will be required for this testing.